

Message Text

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ACTION ACDA-10

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P R 251626Z MAY 77

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2159

SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY

INFO USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

USNMR SHAPE

USCINCEUR

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 MBFR VIENNA 0263

FROM US REP MBFR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, NATO

SUBJECT: MBFR: INFORMAL SESSION WITH EASTERN REPRESENTATIVES
OF MAY 24, 1977

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: IN THE MAY 24, 1977 INFORMAL SESSION OF THE VIENNA TALKS, THE ALLIES WERE REPRESENTED BY THE CANADIAN REP, UK REP AND THE US REP AND THE EAST BY SOVIET REPS TARASOV AND SHUSTOV, GDR REP OESER, AND POLISH REP DABROWA. MILITARY ADVISORS ALSO PARTICIPATED.

2. THE SESSION WAS UNEVENTFUL. EASTERN REPS ARGUED THAT THE MAINTENANCE OF THE PRESENT RELATIONSHIP OF FORCES IN THE REDUCTION AREA WAS IN ESENTIAL CONDITION FOR AN AGREEMENT, AND CLAIMED THAT THE WESTERN REDUCTION APPROACH WOULD CHANGE THAT RELATIONSHIP. TARASOV ANSWERED
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QUESTIONS ON EASTERN DATA POSED BY WESTERN REPS IN MAY 17 SESSION, AND ASKED A FEW QUESTIONS ON WESTERN DATA. WESTERN REPS STRESSED MILITARY SIGNIFICANCE OF WESTERN REDUCTION APPROACH. THEY CRITICIZED EAST'S PROPOSAL FOR A GENERAL COMMITMENT BY NON-US WESTERN DIRECT PARTICIPANTS REGARDING THEIR REDUCTIONS IN THE SECOND STAGE AS TANTAMOUNT TO ACCEPTANCE OF THE EASTERN REDUCTION APPROACH, AND ASKED TWO FURTHER QUESTIONS

ABOUT EASTERN DATA.

3. UK REP REFUTED GDR REP'S CLAIM IN MAY 17 SESSION THAT THE WESTERN PROPOSAL FOR A PHASE I REDUCTION AGREEMENT AMOUNTED TO A DEMAND FOR UNILATERAL SOVIET REDUCTIONS. UK REP SAID THIS CHARGE DELIBERATELY MISREPRESENTED THE WESTERN POSITION. IT WAS INCONTESTIBLE THAT THE REDUCTIONS AND LIMITATIONS THE WEST HAD OFFERED TO UNDERTAKE FOR ITSELF IN THE FIRST PHASE WERE OF CONSIDERABLE MILITARY SIGNIFICANCE. UK REP DETAILED THESE OBLIGATIONS AND POINTED OUT THAT, WHEN COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION INCLUDING GEOGRAPHIC FACTORS WAS CARRIED OUT, IT WAS CLEAR THAT THE TOTAL BURDEN OF OBLIGATIONS THE WEST WAS OFFERING TO UNDERTAKE WAS AT LEAST EQUAL TO WHAT THE WEST WAS ASKING THE EAST TO DO. THE WESTERN APPROACH WOULD RESULT IN AN EQUITABLE OUTCOME, AVOIDING THE CHIEF DEFECT OF THE EASTERN PROPOSAL, WHICH WOULD CONTRACTUALIZE IMPORTANT EASTERN ADVANTAGES IN MILITARY MANPOWER AND MAJOR ARMAMENTS. FOR THESE REASONS, THE WESTERN PROPOSAL MERITED THE POSITIVE RESPONSE THE WEST HAD BEEN ASKING FOR.

4. POLISH REP STATED THAT, CONTRARY TO WESTERN ASSERTIONS, THE EAST HAD GIVEN A CONSIDERED REPLY TO THE WESTERN PROPOSAL OF DECEMBER 1975. THE WESTERN PROPOSAL HAD INCLUDED ONE POSITIVE ELEMENT, THE WEST'S CONSENT TO REDUCE A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF US NUCLEAR MEANS. EAST BELIEVED THAT THIS WESTERN STEP COULD UNDER CERTAIN CONDITIONS BE TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION IN A FUTURE REDUCTION AGREEMENT. BUT THE FACT REMAINED THAT THIS WESTERN PROPOSAL HAD BEEN TIED TO THE ACCEPTANCE OF THE OVERALL WESTERN REDUCTION APPROACH AIMED AT OBTAINING UNILATERAL
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ADVANTAGE FOR THE WEST AND, AT CHANGING THE PRESENT EXISTING APPROXIMATE EQUAL RELATIONSHIP OF FORCES IN CENTRAL EUROPE THROUGH ASYMMETRICAL REDUCTIONS. WESTERN LEADERS HAD IN PUBLIC STATEMENTS RECOGNIZED THE EXISTENCE OF A MILITARY BALANCE BETWEEN NATO AND THE WARSAW PACT. THE PRESERVATION OF THE EXISTING FORCE EQUILIBRIUM IN CENTRAL EUROPE, REFLECTED PARTICULARLY IN APPROXIMATE PARITY OF THE MILITARY MANPOWER ON EACH SIDE WAS THE ESSENTIAL CONDITION OF SUCCESS IN THE VIENNA NEGOTIATIONS.

5. THE US REP ASKED THE EAST WHETHER EASTERN FIGURES INCLUDED ALL ACTIVE DUTY MILITARY PERSONNEL WHO WORKED IN DEPOTS OR OTHER CENTRAL SERVICES SUCH AS COMMUNICATIONS, RAILROADS, PIPELINES, MAINTENANCE AND CONSTRUCTION UNITS, IRRESPECTIVE OF WHETHER UNITS OF THIS KIND SUPPORTED ONLY ONE BRANCH OF THE WARSAW PACT ARMED FORCES OR MORE THAN ONE BRANCH. HE ALSO ONCE AGAIN ASKED THE EAST TO GIVE THE SPECIFIC NAMES OF THE ORGANIZATIONS WHOSE PERSONNEL THE EAST HAS EXCLUDED FROM ITS FIGURES.

6. THE GDR REP CLAIMED THAT THE EASTERN ASSESSMENT THAT THE WEST WAS ASKING FOR UNILATERAL SOVIET REDUCTION WAS CORRECT. HE THEN POINTED OUT THAT THE WEST HAD FROM THE OUTSET EMPHASIZED ACHIEVING APPROXIMATE PARITY IN GROUND FORCE MANPOWER (SIC) AS A MAJOR WESTERN OBJECTIVE IN THE VIENNA TALKS. HE SAID THE EAST WAS NOT INTERESTED IN DISTURBING THE PRESENT APPROXIMATE EQUILIBRIUM IN THE MILITARY MANPOWER OF BOTH SIDES AS A RESULT OF REDUCTIONS. THERE WERE THEREFORE NO SUBSTANTIAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN EAST AND WEST ON THIS IMPORTANT QUESTION. BUT THE WEST WAS PROCEEDING FROM AN ARBITRARY AND EXCESSIVE ESTIMATE OF EASTERN FORCES IN ASKING FOR ASYMMETRICAL REDUCTIONS. GDR REP CLAIMED THAT THE

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S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 MBFR VIENNA 0263

FROM US REP MBFR

WESTERN PROPOSALS ENVISAGED THAT THE WEST WOULD REDUCE 90,000 MEN TO A COMMON CEILING OF 700,000 WHILE ASKING THE EAST TO REDUCE 240,000 MEN AND THAT THIS WOULD RESULT IN A SITUATION WHERE NATO PARTICIPANTS WOULD HAVE A GROUND FORCE CEILING OF 700,000 MEN AND THE EAST OF ONLY 565,000 MEN. HE SAID THAT EAST HAD GIVEN ALL NECESSARY INFORMATION FOR THE WEST TO CHANGE ITS ERRONEOUS ESTIMATES OF WARSAW PACT FORCES. THE WEST HAD THUS FAR REFUSED TO CHANGE THESE ESTIMATES, BUT

HAD GIVEN NO PROOF OF ITS CONTENTIONS. THIS WESTERN POSITION WAS ARTIFICIALLY DELAYING THE NEGOTIATIONS AND IMPEDED THE ELABORATION OF AN AGREEMENT.

7. CANADIAN REP GAVE REASONS FOR THE WESTERN CONCLUSION THAT WHAT THE EASTERN PARTICIPANTS WERE REALLY ASKING FOR UNDER THEIR FEBRUARY 1976 PROPOSAL WAS NOT A GENERAL COMMITMENT, BUT A PACKAGE OF SPECIFIC COMMITMENTS WHICH TAKEN
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TOGETHER AMOUNTED TO ACCEPTANCE OF THE WHILE EASTERN REDUCTION PROGRAM. MOREOVER, THE SPECIFIC OUTCOME TO WHICH WESTERN PARTICIPANTS WOULD BE REQUIRED TO COMMIT THEMSELVES UNDER THE SO-CALLED GENERAL COMMITMENT WAS THE SAME AS THAT ORIGINALLY PROPOSED BY THE EAST, NAMELY, A CONTRACTUALIZATION OF THE EAST'S NUMERICAL ADVANTAGES IN MILITARY MANPOWER AND MAJOR ARMAMENTS. IT DID NOT ADVANCE THE NEGOTIATIONS TO SEEK TO PRESENT A COMMITMENT WHICH EMBODIED THE SUBSTANCE OF THE EASTERN REDUCTION APPROACH AS A GENERAL COMMITMENT.

8. TARASOV COMPLAINED THAT QUESTIONS ASKED BY WESTERN REPS ABOUT EASTERN DATA IN INFORMAL DISCUSSION OF MAY 17 WERE REPETITIVE. NEVERTHELESS, THE EAST WAS WILLING TO RESPOND. HE SAID THAT: (1) THE EAST DID NOT EMPLOY FOR THE FUNCTIONS ON LIST A GIVEN THE EAST ON FEBRUARY 15 ANY PERSONNEL WHO WORE UNIFORM BUT WHOM THE EAST DID NOT CONSIDER TO BE ACTIVE DUTY SERVICEMEN, (2) THERE WERE NO RESERVISTS IN THE EASTERN ARMED FORCES IN THE AREA OF REDUCTIONS ON ACTIVE DUTY FOR A LONG PERIOD OF TIME AND (3) THERE WERE NO PERSONNEL LISTED ON THE ROSTERS OF UNITS OR FORMATIONS WHO DID NOT WEAR UNIFORM. TARASOV ASKED THREE QUESTIONS ON WESTERN DATA. IN ENSUING DISCUSSION, TARASOV INDICATED HE WOULD ANSWER AT A LATER TIME THE WESTERN QUESTION OF MAY 17 WHETHER THERE WERE ANY PERSONNEL PERFORMING ANY FUNCTIONS FOR EASTERN ARMED FORCES WHO WERE CONSCRIPTED TO PERFORM SUCH TASKS AND WHOM THE EAST DID NOT COUNT AS ACTIVE DUTY MILITARY PERSONNEL. TARASOV HAD REPLIED TO THE QUESTION BY SAYING THAT THERE WERE NO PERSONNEL PERFORMING THE FUNCTIONS DESCRIBED ON LIST A WHO WERE CONSCRIPTED TO PERFORM SUCH TASKS AND WHO HAD NOT BEEN COUNTED IN EASTERN FIGURES AS ACTIVE DUTY MILITARY PERSONNEL. HE HAD NOT REPLIED TO THE QUESTION IN THE MORE GENERAL WAY IN WHICH IT HAD BEEN POSED. END SUMMARY. RESOR

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